

THE RICHMOND DISPATCH.

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ADVERTISING RATES. HALF INCH OR LESS. 1 line 100 2 lines 200 3 lines 300 4 lines 400 5 lines 500 6 lines 600 7 lines 700 8 lines 800 9 lines 900 10 lines 1000 11 lines 1100 12 lines 1200 13 lines 1300 14 lines 1400 15 lines 1500 16 lines 1600 17 lines 1700 18 lines 1800 19 lines 1900 20 lines 2000 21 lines 2100 22 lines 2200 23 lines 2300 24 lines 2400 25 lines 2500 26 lines 2600 27 lines 2700 28 lines 2800 29 lines 2900 30 lines 3000 31 lines 3100 32 lines 3200 33 lines 3300 34 lines 3400 35 lines 3500 36 lines 3600 37 lines 3700 38 lines 3800 39 lines 3900 40 lines 4000 41 lines 4100 42 lines 4200 43 lines 4300 44 lines 4400 45 lines 4500 46 lines 4600 47 lines 4700 48 lines 4800 49 lines 4900 50 lines 5000 51 lines 5100 52 lines 5200 53 lines 5300 54 lines 5400 55 lines 5500 56 lines 5600 57 lines 5700 58 lines 5800 59 lines 5900 60 lines 6000 61 lines 6100 62 lines 6200 63 lines 6300 64 lines 6400 65 lines 6500 66 lines 6600 67 lines 6700 68 lines 6800 69 lines 6900 70 lines 7000 71 lines 7100 72 lines 7200 73 lines 7300 74 lines 7400 75 lines 7500 76 lines 7600 77 lines 7700 78 lines 7800 79 lines 7900 80 lines 8000 81 lines 8100 82 lines 8200 83 lines 8300 84 lines 8400 85 lines 8500 86 lines 8600 87 lines 8700 88 lines 8800 89 lines 8900 90 lines 9000 91 lines 9100 92 lines 9200 93 lines 9300 94 lines 9400 95 lines 9500 96 lines 9600 97 lines 9700 98 lines 9800 99 lines 9900 100 lines 10000

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 1886.

The Blair Bill—The Power.

Yesterday we called upon Democratic congressmen who have any doubt as to the power of Congress to pass the Blair Bill to read the speech of Judge GEORGE, of Mississippi, on that point and be convinced. Here in Virginia, where the Federal courts are claiming jurisdiction in cases in which the State herself is the real party—where our tobacco we dare not sell without complying with Federal laws on the subject—where internal-revenue officials stand ready to arrest the unlettered countryman who makes a few gallons of brandy out of his own apples—here, we say, it seems like a mockery to talk about limitations upon the power of the Congress that passed all such laws.

But let us hear Judge GEORGE. In 1794 Congress passed a law appropriating \$25,000 to refugees from the island of San Domingo. Commencing under JEFFERSON in 1801, appropriations have been made every year up till now in aid of American seamen in foreign countries. In 1796 \$4,000 was donated to two American citizens who had paid that sum as a ransom to the Government of Algiers. In 1812 Congress gave money to sufferers from an earthquake in Venezuela. In 1847 ships-of-war were sent from the United States to Ireland to carry provisions, and in 1871 similar ships were sent to France. In 1876 millions of dollars were voted to the Centennial; afterwards over a million to the New Orleans Exposition. Congress buys silk-worm eggs, garden-seeds, corn, wheat, tea, and what not.

Where, asks Judge GEORGE, is the power in the Constitution to pay money for watching the transit of Venus, or for geological surveys? Or for sending expeditions to South America, or elsewhere? Or round the globe? Where did you find power to expend the people's money in an expedition to the North Pole? Or for surveying the Nicaragua canal, or the Panama route? Then you vote money every year to educate the Indians. Can you vote money to educate Indians, and yet not have the power to vote money to educate negroes or white men? Then there is the congressional library, which has cost millions of dollars, where is the constitutional power for that?

Again: Whence comes the power to spend money on monuments to GRANT, or WASHINGTON, or anybody else? Then said Judge GEORGE:

"Then come two or three of the greatest transactions in this country in which money was spent, and I should like to know where the power exists in the Federal Constitution, under the construction placed on it by the opponents of this bill, to make the purchase of Louisiana, the purchase of Alaska, the purchase of that magnificent domain which we acquired from Mexico, the purchase of Florida, the purchase under the Gadsden treaty of a still further strip of the Mexican territory."

"It does seem to me when we compare these transactions of the Government with the theory of the Constitution advocated by the opponents of this bill that it is a great misfortune that the people of the United States are not either Indians or inhabitants of the isles of the sea, or of some foreign country, or possibly of some celestial planet, so that they might derive some benefit from the taxes which they are compelled to pay."

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Up to this time the press of Virginia has taken a high and noble stand in the credit of the press. It is said that all the articles in the papers have been written in an honest, manly, and courteous style. Let the press—'as I have no doubt it will—continue to bear that high and dignified position in permitting publications reflecting both sides in a manner which has won the admiration of all classes and factions, and views and ideas. Let all of the organizations be kind and polite; 'don't use and sneer at one another.' 'Tis lawful to form those societies; 'tis lawful to have those issues; 'tis lawful to make the fight. 'Tis not right to abuse; 'tis not right to talk mean; 'tis not right to stir up strife by talking and writing in a manner unbecoming good citizens, unbecoming gentlemen, unbecoming Virginians, and unbecoming Christians. Abuse is not arguing, and the result will be carried on properly, and the result will be accepted in good faith by all persons, and, as Virginians have always done, the majority has assumed the responsibility, having proper care and protection for the minority.

Now, I have given the above as the proper way to take the question as a matter of policy. I have examined the local-option law from a legal point of view. I do not like to thrust my legal opinion, or any one else's, upon the people of the State of Virginia, and I voted for the law in the Senate of Virginia, and aided in its feeble way to perfect the law and give to the people what, in my humble judgment, they had asked for and both political parties had given the promise. I do not hesitate to give you my opinion as a lawyer that the local-option law, if adopted by the people in any municipal district, county, town, or city, cannot interfere with any licenses already issued and being used until they expire by limitation.

I have the law before me at this writing, and I repeat my view—viz., if a liquor license commences to run on the 1st day of May, 1886, and expires on the 30th of April, 1887, it cannot be revoked. If that community, between those periods, should vote to have local option the vote would prevent any more licenses from being issued in that locality. When license commences to run they are governed by the then existing laws, and are not dependent on anything else. There are causes existing why licenses should be revoked; but I do not think that if local option should be adopted after licenses are issued that they could be used as one of the causes.

I think a party taking out a license for one year has a vested right, subject to the then existing laws. Now, mark, I say when license commences, I know some persons may apply to the court for license pending the contest before the people, and after obtaining the license and before the first day of May the vote should be for local option. I think this license would be inoperative and should not be used. If it were not so some persons could obtain license long ways back to commence in the future. If an election should take place in Richmond after the 1st day of May, and the vote should be for local option, I am of the opinion that those operating under proper licenses would have the right to continue until their licenses expire, so far as the vote is concerned. Of course I don't wish to be understood that the other laws for closing up the liquor-stores would be inoperative.

Now, what are we to gather from the foregoing if I am right in my views? I will tell you: Every community, or county, or town, or city, desiring to have a election under the local-option law, let it take place before the 1st day of May, 1886, if you wish to test the question as to the granting of licenses for the next license year, which commences on the 1st day of May, 1886, and ends on the 30th of April, 1887. The people in the country have plenty of time if they wish to do so. The cities have full time also. Elections in the cities on the fourth Thursday in May, and special elections can be held three days before the fourth Thursday in May; I mean to say if the cities desire it.

But it seems as if common prudence should dictate even to a statesman of the calibre of Mr. Boutelle that upon such subjects as this he should be sure of his facts before moving what is in fact a vote of censure."

It appears, however, from the proceedings in Congress yesterday that BOUTELLE is not inclined to invoke silence, and that he is far from being gifted with common prudence. And it may be all very well that this is the case. Aside from the fact that such men as BOUTELLE serve to while away many a dull congressional hour, it is for the good of the country that they should make the job of committing political harikari a complete one.

Local-Option Election at Once.

In response to a request from a prominent Good Templar for his views on the local-option law passed at the late session of the General Assembly, Senator J. N. STUBBS wrote the following letter, which is published at the request of several gentlemen.

Mr. STUBBS is and has been for several years one of the most prominent members of the order of Good Templars in Virginia, and was the patron of the original local-option bill offered in the Senate, for which the present law is Senator RHEA's substitute:

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